

Adoptation  
 Alliance of Community Assistance  
 Ministries of Greater Houston (ACAM)  
 Alliance Adolescent & Children's  
 Services  
 Arrow Child and Family Ministries  
 Bering Omega Community Services  
 Care for Elders  
 Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.  
 Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of  
 Galveston-Houston  
 ChildBuilders  
 CHILDREN AT RISK  
 Children's Defense Fund  
 Coalition for Behavioral Health Services  
 Coalition for the Homeless of  
 Houston/Harris Co., Inc.  
 Collaborative for Children  
 Communities In Schools  
 Community Family Centers  
 Covenant House of Texas  
 DePelchin Children's Center  
 Family Services of Greater Houston  
 Fort Bend Regional Council on  
 Substance Abuse, Inc.  
 Gateway to Care  
 Good Neighbor Healthcare Center  
 Gulf Coast CHIP Coalition  
 Harris County Child Abuse Task Force  
 Harris County Healthcare Alliance  
 Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston  
 Houston Area Association for the  
 Education of Young Children  
 Houston Area Women's Center  
 Houston Food Bank  
 Houston Area Immunization Registry  
 IntraCare Hospitals  
 Jewish Family Service  
 Jewish Federation of Greater Houston  
 Justice for Children  
 League of Women Voters Houston  
 Legacy Community Health  
 Services, Inc.  
 Memorial Hermann Healthcare System  
 Mental Health America  
 of Greater Houston  
 NAMI Metropolitan Houston  
 NAMI West Houston, Inc.  
 Neighborhood Centers, Inc.  
 Neuhaus Education Center  
 Northwest Assistance Ministries  
 Planned Parenthood of Houston  
 and Southeast Texas, Inc.  
 Prepared 4 Life  
 San Jose Clinic  
 SEARCH  
 South County Community Clinic,  
 DBA The Community Clinic  
 Spaulding for Children  
 St. Luke's Episcopal Health System  
 Systems of Hope  
 Texans Together Education Fund  
 Texas Children's Hospital  
 The Arc of Greater Houston  
 The Methodist Hospital System  
 The Network of Behavioral  
 Health Providers  
 United Way of Greater Houston  
 Wesley Community Center  
 YMCA of Greater Houston  
 YWCA of Greater Houston

## Community Care: Quality Attendant Training

**Position Statement approved by One Voice: November 14, 2008**

**Issue/Concern:** Currently, there is a lack of training required for attendants who support elderly and disabled persons in their homes.<sup>2</sup> Attendants provide support including bathing, feeding, toileting, transportation, and must be able to accurately assess vital signs, changes in a patient's condition, etc. Attendants have one of the highest workplace injury rates of any occupation (10.1 per 100 full time workers compared to 6.8 per 100 workers in construction). The physical demands of the job add to the high turnover rate.

When performing these physical tasks, the health and safety of both the attendant and patient are at risk, yet attendants receive little formal training. While Texas requires training for crossing guards, cosmetologists and dog groomers, the training requirements for personal care attendants in Medicaid agencies are not specified. Regulations for attendants simply require a general orientation to company policy and procedure that may even be completed over the phone at the discretion of the supervisor.

Today in Texas, we require more training for manicurists than we do for personal attendants for our elderly citizens.

**Specific Policy Recommendation(s):** Require 16 hour pre-employment training for all attendants. Minimum training standards must require training in the following areas: cultural sensitivity; communication skills; proper lifting and moving techniques; and dementia and Alzheimer-related issues. Recommendations for training curriculum are based on a 2 year pilot study conducted by Care for Elders in 2005-07. <sup>1</sup> The curriculum is available through the community college system in Texas as well as other local organizations and trainers.

**How does this issue/recommendation relate to prevention and early intervention or maximizing federal funds for health and human services?** Proactive attendant training, directly related to actual responsibilities, will vastly reduce the possibility of abusive or negligent care as well as reducing turnover of attendants. Most importantly, trained attendants can help delay or prevent the institutionalization of elderly and disabled people.

### Supporting Facts/Research/Resources:

1) Care for Elders' Report on Direct Care Workers:

[http://www.careforelders.org/files/DDF/CFE%20Quality%20and%20Workforce%20Initiatives%20Final%20Report\\_%20April%202008.pdf](http://www.careforelders.org/files/DDF/CFE%20Quality%20and%20Workforce%20Initiatives%20Final%20Report_%20April%202008.pdf)

Summarizes and discusses the evaluation of four interventions (enhanced screening, new-hire orientation, continuing education series, recognition/reward program) implemented by Care for Elders during a 2 year pilot program to address the goals of improving direct care service quality, training, and stability.

2) Texas Dept. of Human Service Report on Direct Service Worker Training Programs:

<http://www.careforelders.org/files/DDF/SB95reportMarch2001%255B1%255D.pdf>

An evaluation of training programs for personal care attendants as requested by SB 95 of the 76<sup>th</sup> Legislature. Discusses issues of personal care attendants in relation to the goals of the Texas long-term care system as stated in state strategic plans. The need for training is well documented.

3) Texas 2008 Direct Service Workers Report:

<http://www.careforelders.org/files/DDF/FINAL%20DSW%20REPORT%2C%20June%2018%2C%202008.pdf>

Gives background of who direct service workers are and what they do. Recommendations of stakeholders to offer compensation, opportunity, and support to Personal Care Attendants as a result of small focus groups held around the state.

4) PHI Training Direct Care Workforce: [http://phinational.org/publications/PHI\\_Training\\_Overview.pdf](http://phinational.org/publications/PHI_Training_Overview.pdf)

A publication for provider agencies on developing quality training programs for employees that provide services in the home.

5) 40 TAC § 47.25 Attendant orientation requirements in the Texas Administrative Code  
[http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p\\_dir=&p\\_rloc=&p\\_tloc=&p\\_ploc=&pg=1&p\\_tac=&ti=40&pt=1&ch=47&rl=25](http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=40&pt=1&ch=47&rl=25)

**Contact:** Leah Mueller at 713.667.9336 ext. 111 or [lmuel@ifshouston.org](mailto:lmuel@ifshouston.org)